

President Bush. Thank—[laughter].

[At this point, an interpreter gave a Russian translation of President Bush's remarks.]

President Bush. Thank you. *Spasibo*.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:34 p.m. at the JW Marriott Hotel Lima. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia. President Medvedev spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Situation in Zimbabwe

November 22, 2008

Nearly 8 months have passed since the Zimbabwean people voted for a new President, yet they still are governed by an illegitimate regime that continues to suppress democratic voices and basic human rights. In addition to its disastrous economic policies which have forced half the population to rely on food assistance, the Mugabe regime is now assaulting doctors and nurses, denying citizens access to basic medical services, and stealing donor funds intended for HIV/AIDS patients.

In October alone, independent organizations documented some 1,300 incidents of politically motivated violence and harassment by the regime. We call for an end to the Mugabe regime's brutal repression of basic freedoms and for the formation of a legitimate government that represents the will of the people as expressed in the March 2008 elections.

In spite of the regime's aggressive actions against its own people, the United States will continue to honor its commitment to provide emergency humanitarian assistance, already totaling \$186 million in 2008, and stands ready to provide other forms of assistance pending the formation of a legitimate government that represents the will of the Zimbabwean people.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr.

November 24, 2008

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for inviting me in for a cup of coffee. The Secretary and I share the concerns of our citizens, the concerns about jobs, the concerns about their savings accounts. This is a tough situation for America, but we'll recover from it. And the first step to recovery is to safeguard our financial system.

Now, last night on Air Force One coming back from Peru, I talked at length to the Secretary about his recommendation on the decisions made to safeguard Citicorp [Citigroup].* We have made these kind of decisions in the past; made one last night. And if need be, we're going to make these kind of decisions to safeguard our financial system in the future.

I talked to President-elect Obama about the decision we made. I told the American people, and I told the President-elect when I first met him, that any time we were to make a big decision during this transition, he will be informed, as will his team.

Secretary Paulson is working closely with the President-elect's transition team. It's important for the American people to know that there is close cooperation. It's important for the American people to know that we will safeguard the financial system as the first step necessary for financial—for economic recovery. And so, Mr. Secretary, thanks for your hard work. Appreciate it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. at the Treasury Department.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel

November 24, 2008

President Bush. I am pleased to welcome my friend Prime Minister Ehud Olmert back

* White House correction.

to the Oval Office. And I thank you for bringing your wife to have dinner tonight with Laura and me. I'm looking forward to it.

We've been through a lot together during our time in office. We strongly believe that Israel will benefit by having a Palestinian state, a democracy on her border that works for peace. And, Prime Minister, that vision is alive because of you. And I thank you for your steadfast support for peace.

And it's not easy. It's not easy to try to change the paradigm, and I understand that. But one thing is for certain: You've kept your word. And in international politics, that's important. And I want to thank you for the friendship, and thank you for your vision. And I just want you to know that I believe that vision is alive and needs to be worked on.

And again, I welcome you. Appreciate you coming.

Prime Minister Olmert. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'm delighted to have this opportunity to express again the deep gratitude that we all have to you, personally, as a human being, as a friend, as a courageous leader who has helped Israel so much over the period since you were President of the United States of America.

We will never forget that you have removed one of the most threatening strategic dangers from Israel on the east side, in Iraq. And this is a great achievement that makes life much better for many people in our part of the world, particularly for us and for our neighbors as well.

You have set forth in motion the Annapolis process, which I was very proud to take part in.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Olmert. It continues with your guidance and support and inspiration. And this is very important, because as you say, a two-state solution is the only possible way to resolve the conflict in the Middle East.

So, Mr. President, on behalf of the people of Israel, I want to thank you. The importance of your leadership is greatly appreciated in our country. And I'm sure that when the history books will be written, the contributions that you made to the safety and

security of many people will be greatly appreciated.

Personally, I want to thank you for your friendship on behalf of my wife Aliza and myself. And I'm so happy and proud that I have an opportunity to bid farewell to you before you leave this great place and before I leave my office. And I'm sure that we will continue our friendship for many years to come.

Thank you very much.

The President. Sure. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Aliza Olmert, wife of Prime Minister Olmert.

Remarks to the Community at Fort Campbell, Kentucky

November 25, 2008

The President. Thank you. Please be seated; unless, of course, you don't have a seat. [Laughter] I am honored to be here at Fort Campbell. I'm honored to be with the Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne; the Night Stalkers of the 160th; the Green Berets of the 5th Special Forces Group; all members of the Fort Campbell community. You are part of the finest military in the world. I have one word for you: Hooah!

I also bring greetings from another man named Bush, America's only skydiving President. [Laughter] He said, "Pass on these two words: Air assault!"

In recent weeks, this post has been the scene of heartwarming family reunions. Many of you recently finished deployments to Iraq. You performed with courage and distinction on the frontlines of the war on terror. You have returned on success. On behalf of a grateful nation, I'm proud to welcome home the Bastogne Brigade, the Strike Brigade, the Rakkasan Brigade—[applause]. Job well done.

I want to thank General Townsend for his service. I'm proud to be with his wife, Melissa. I thank General Schloesser's wife, Patty. I appreciate Maria McConville. I want to thank Theresa Vail. These women represent the military families who have sacrificed just